



# Going to a Magistrates' Court

## Information for people with learning disabilities



If the police think you have done something wrong  
you will have to go to a magistrates' court.

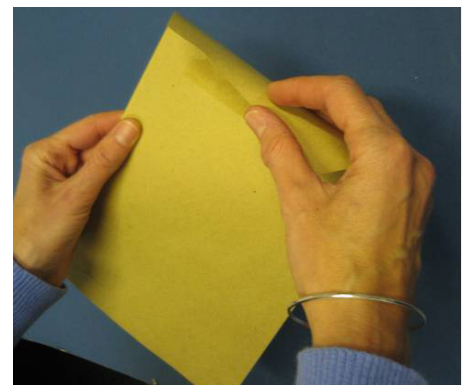
Ask someone to help you with the information  
in this booklet.

This leaflet tells you what will happen when you go to the magistrates' court.



The police will tell you when you must go to the court.  
You may wish to speak to a solicitor.

You may also get a letter telling you when you must go to the court.



You can take a carer, a friend or a relative with you to the court.

When you go into the court a security person will want to see what you have in your pockets.

They may ask you to leave your things with them.  
You will get them back when you leave the court.



The security person will use a metal detector.

This is to check if you have anything that could harm you or other people.

An usher will come and meet you.  
You need to tell the usher your name.  
The usher is there to help you.



The usher will ask if you have a solicitor.  
Tell the usher the name of your solicitor.  
If you do not have a solicitor you can ask to speak to the duty solicitor.

You do not have to pay any money to speak to the duty solicitor.



You may have to wait to see the solicitor.  
There is a waiting area where you can buy food and drinks.

Your solicitor will talk to you in private about your case.  
Your carer, friend or relative can stay with you.



You should tell your solicitor if you think you have done anything wrong.  
Your solicitor will help you decide whether you should enter a guilty or not guilty plea.  
Guilty means you have done something wrong.



You may have to wait before you go into the courtroom.



Your solicitor may also have to help other people.

When you hear your name you should go into the courtroom.

You can take your carer, friend or relative with you.  
Ask the usher if you are not sure about anything.



In the courtroom the magistrates will sit behind a large desk.

The magistrates are the people who will decide if you have done something wrong.



The legal adviser sits in front of the magistrates.  
The legal adviser will tell you where you should stand.

You will need to tell the legal adviser

Your name

Your date of birth

Where you live



The legal adviser might ask you if you are guilty or not guilty.

The prosecutor will also be in the courtroom. They might explain to the court why they think you are guilty.

Your solicitor will be in the courtroom to help you.  
You can ask to speak to your solicitor at any time.



Sometimes members of the public will be sitting at the back of the courtroom.

Your solicitor and the prosecutor may have to speak to other people about your case.



The magistrates may tell you that you must come back to the court on another day.

The magistrates may give you bail.  
This means you can go home.  
The magistrates will tell you what you must do and must not do.



If you do not do what the magistrates say the police could arrest you.

If you have said that you are not guilty you will have to come back to the court on another day.



This is called a trial.

Your solicitor will explain this to you.

At the trial you will be able to say why you are not guilty.

The magistrates will decide if you are guilty or not guilty.



If the magistrates say you are not guilty you can go home.

If you or the magistrates have said that you are guilty, the prosecutor will explain what you have done wrong.

Your solicitor will tell the magistrates why you have done something wrong.

The magistrates will tell you what will happen next.



You may have to pay some money because you have done something wrong.

This is called a fine.



You may have to do some free work.



You may have to meet with a probation officer.



You may have to stay at home during the day or night  
and wear something around your leg.  
This is called a Tag.



If you have done something very bad the  
magistrates may tell you that you are not allowed  
to go home.

You may have to go to a secure hospital.



You may have to go to prison.

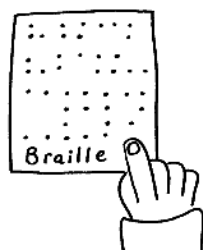
This leaflet was developed in partnership with

- The CWP Learning Disability Service
- HM Courts & Tribunals Service
- Justices of the Peace
- Cheshire Probation Trust
- G4S

The leaflet was written as a continuation to the 'Going to the Police Station' leaflet developed with Cheshire Police.

Service users who have experienced going to the magistrates' court were also consulted on the content of this leaflet.

This leaflet is available in other languages or formats



For more information see [www.cwp.nhs.uk](http://www.cwp.nhs.uk).

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The information in this leaflet was valid at the date of production **May 2012** and is due for review in **May 2014**.

Leaflet code: E-GMC-11-502